

CLAIMS

1. A load carrier for coupling to a vehicle (5), said load carrier (1) comprising a loading frame (2) and a supporting arch (3) that extends substantially upwardly (T) from and transversely to said loading frame, said supporting arch being divisible into first and second arch parts (12, 13), each of which arch parts is pivotally coupled (15) to said loading frame such that, when divided, each of said first and second arch parts is configured to be pivoted down to a storage position lying substantially level with said loading frame, characterised in that said arch parts (12, 13) are configured to be interlocked substantially directly to each other into an in-use position in which said first and said second arch parts substantially alone form said supporting arch (3).
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2. A load carrier according to claim 1 wherein, when unlocked from said in-use position, said first and second arch parts (12, 13) are substantially immediately pivotable by a single movement for each into their respective said storage positions.
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3. A load carrier according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein said pivotal coupling (15) between said arch parts (12, 13) and said loading frame (2) is configured such that said arch parts, when they are pivoted, are shiftable laterally (F, B) relative to each other by such a distance that said arch parts 25 are pivotable without giving rise to pivot-blocking contact therebetween.
4. A load carrier according to claim 3, wherein said lateral shift is implemented automatically when said arch parts (12, 13) are pivoted.
- 30 5. A load carrier according to claim 3 or claim 4, wherein each said arch part is configured to shift laterally away from the other when being pivoted.

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6. A load carrier according to any preceding claim, wherein said pivotal coupling (15) comprises a cam or groove and follower mechanism.
- 5 7. A load carrier according to any preceding claim, wherein said pivotal coupling (15) comprises a shaft or tube portion (18) that is rotatable in a sleeve portion (17), in which arrangement one of its parts (18) defines a groove (19) that interacts with a pin (20) disposed in the other part (17) and which groove has an inclination (α) relative to the longitudinal axis (G-G) of said pivotal coupling, with the effect that said parts (17, 18) of the shaft/tube (18) and sleeve (17) arrangement shift automatically relative to each other along the longitudinal axis of said pivotal coupling when the associated said arch part (12, 13) is pivoted.
- 10 15 8. A load carrier according to any preceding claim wherein, when said arch parts (12, 13) are in their respective said storage positions (H), said arch parts occupy substantially the same height (h) as said loading frame (2).
- 20 9. A load carrier according to any preceding claim wherein, when said arch parts (12, 13) are in their respective said storage positions (H), said arch parts lie at least partially on top of said loading frame (2).
- 25 10. A load carrier according to any preceding claim, wherein said first arch part (12) and said second arch part (13) are configured to be interlocked directly to each other by closure of a manually operable coupling (14) that comprises a first coupling part (14B) integrated with said first arch part (12) and a second coupling part (14A) configured to co-operate with said first coupling part and integrated with said second arch part (13).
- 30 11. A load carrier according to claim 10, wherein said coupling (14) comprises manually operable quick-release coupling.

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12. A load carrier according to claim 10 or claim 11, wherein said coupling (14) is configured for tool-free locking or unlocking.
- 5 13. A load carrier according to any one of claims 10 to 12, wherein said coupling (14) comprises a screw joint (14A, 14B).
- 10 14. A load carrier according to claim 13, wherein said screw joint comprises a male portion (14A) integrated with one said arch part (13) and a female portion (14B) integrated with the other said arch part (12), said female portion being configured to substantially envelope said male portion when said screw joint is closed.
- 15 15. A load carrier according to claim 13 or claim 14, wherein a female portion (14B) of said screw joint comprises a hand-grip for manual twist release of said screw joint.
- 20 16. A load carrier according to any preceding claim, wherein said arch parts (12, 13) and said loading frame (2) comprise hollow and preferably tubular members.
17. A load carrier according to any preceding claim, wherein said load carrier comprises a bicycle carrier.
- 25 18. A kit of parts configured to be assembled into a load carrier (1) according to any preceding claim,
19. A vehicle including a load carrier according to any one of claims 1 to 17 or a load carrier assembled from a kit of parts according to claim 18.

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